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The Family Status of Chinese Women - the Past and the Present

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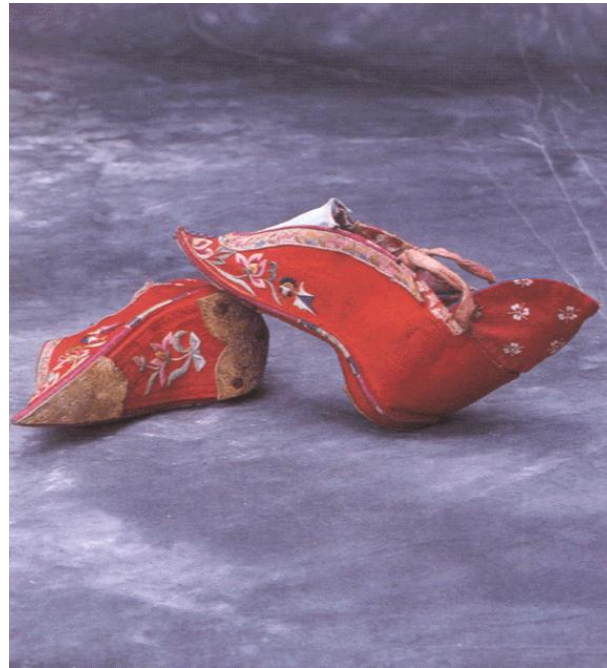
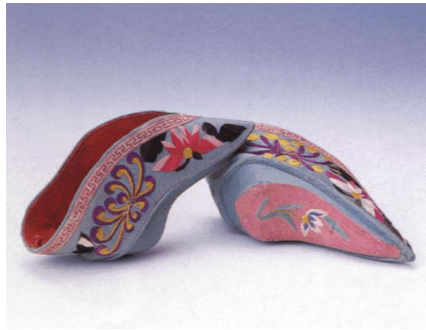
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Shao Jirong

Foot Binding





San Cong Shi De

- **Three Obediences:**
 - to father before marriage;
 - to husband after marriage;
 - to son after the death of husband



San Cong Shi De

- **Four Virtues:**
 - Morality
 - proper speech
 - modest manner
 - diligent needlework

Arranged Marriage

- Polygamy:
concubine
↓
secondary
wives





Ignorance is a woman's virtue.

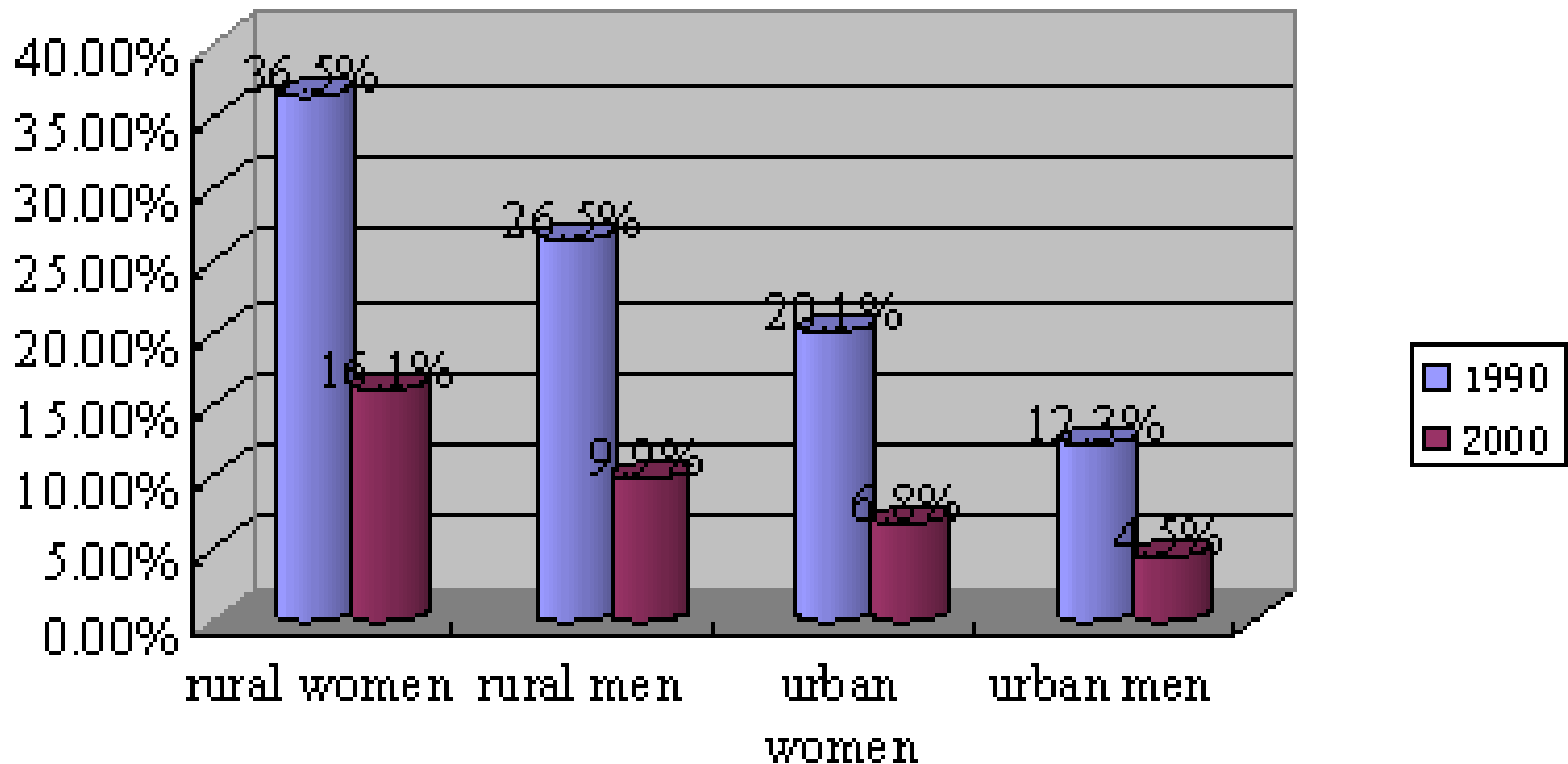
- An ignorant woman is a joy forever.
- A woman who lacks talent is virtuous.



Changing Views of Marriage

- **Marrying and having children later in life**
 - the average age at which men married: 28
 - the average age at which women married: 27
 - the average age at which couples had children: 29.7 years

Percentage of marital decisions made by parents over the past 10 years





Rights of Income Management and Allocation

46.5%	spent their personal incomes freely
51.3%	combined their personal incomes with their husbands' for communal use
2.2%	gave their income to their husbands



Speaking Freely: Decision Makers

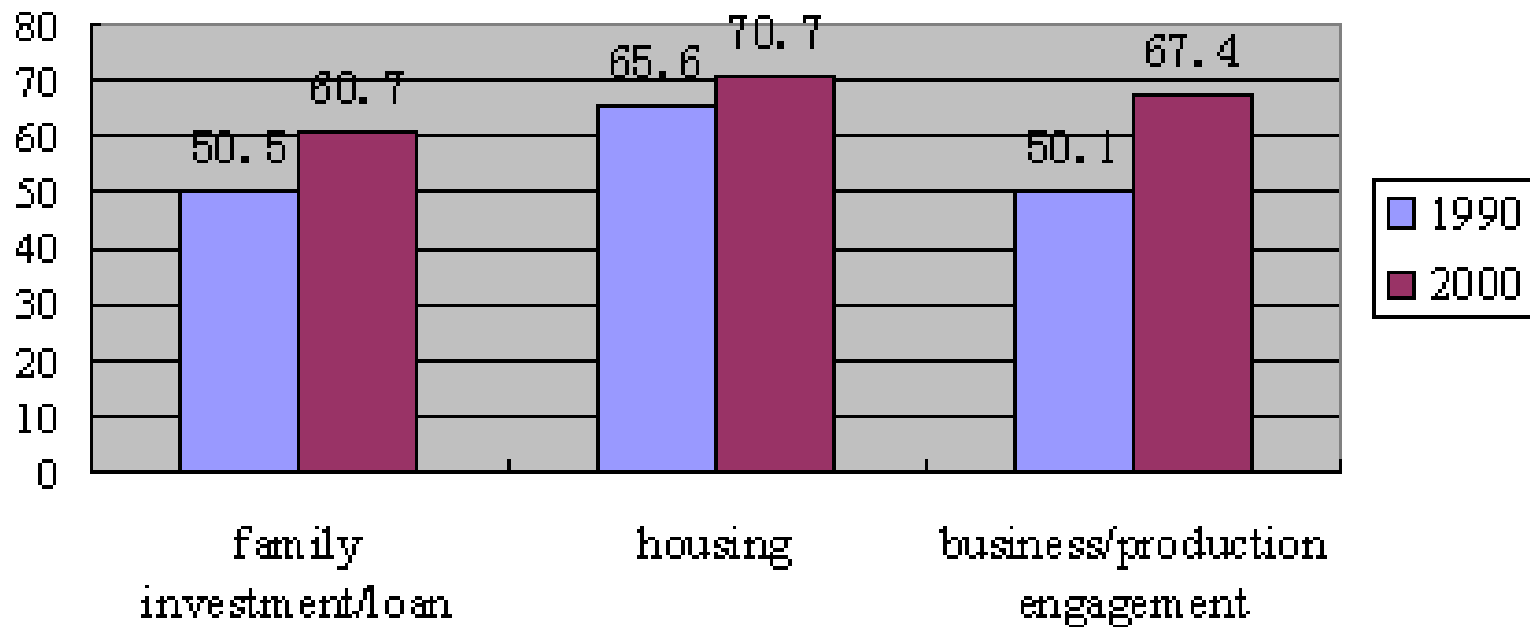
percentage of families	decision makers
60%	equal decision-making power
more than 20%	wives have more decision-making power
nearly 20%	men have more authority over decisions



decisions on daily consumption:

- 77.3% of the respondents were in charge of choosing and buying food, clothes and daily necessities for their families.

Women's Involvement in Making Decisions on Major Family Issues over the Past 10 Years (%)





married women in large cities:

- **22.7% had the final say in purchasing houses, cars or other valuables;**
- **77.3% made decisions after consulting their husbands**



In reality there are no differences between men and women when making decisions

	women	men
to purchase goods of top grades	88.7%	90.9%
to support one's parents	91.3%	94%



Less Housework

year	average time women spent on housework every day
1990	5.01 hours
2000	4.01 hours



		average time spent on housework every day in 2000
urban areas	women	3.34 hours
	men	1.26 hours
rural areas	women	4.27 hours
	men	1.35 hours



family-oriented stereotype

- “men should work outside the family while women should be responsible for family affairs”



Modern Views of Childbirth

■ Reducing the birth rate

- -- nearly 80% of the respondents wanted to have one child
- -- 21.7% of the women said they preferred to be DINKs
- -- about 76% said they did not want to have children
- -- nearly 55% of the women said they were in a predicament

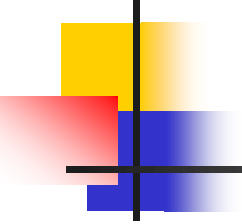
Gendering: Boys or girls?

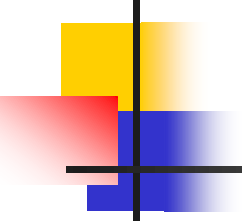


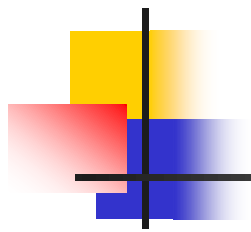


Divorce

- the right to divorce
- rapid increase of divorce rate

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- -- 77.3% of the women were content with their material lives
 - -- 67.6% said they were satisfied with their spiritual lives
 - -- 93.2% of the women felt satisfied with their marriages and family life.

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- -- 45.6% of women regarded their marriages lives as “happy”
 - -- 19.9% thought they and their husbands were “treating each other with respect”
 - -- 31.7% said the quality of their marriages was “so-so”
 - -- 1.4% felt their marriages were “miserable”.



Thank You!